

# **Community Appearance Commission**

## **Minutes**

**February 2, 2005**

The regular meeting of the Salisbury Community Appearance Commission was called to order on Wednesday, February 2, 2005, at 4:10 p.m. by Chairman Bruce Wilson, in the Council Chamber, 217 South Main Street, Salisbury, North Carolina. The following members were present and absent:

Present: Cindee Bridges, Greta Connor, Judy Kandl, Barbara Perry, Bill Safrit, Johnny Safrit, Preston Sale, and Bruce Wilson

Absent: Suzette Davis, James Donaldson, and Michael Lippard

Staff: Lynn Raker and Diana Moghrabi

Mr. Bruce Wilson opened the meeting with the approval of the January minutes and the January financial report.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Art in Public Places**

- *HAT (History and Art Trail)*. Barbara Perry and Robert Crum made a presentation to City Council on February 1, 2005. Council agreed that the committee should move forward and so they are in the process of applying for grant money.

Lynn Raker ran the Power Point presentation for the Community Appearance Commission to view. She incorporated in the cover slide the mapping color scheme that Downtown Salisbury, Inc. is using; each of the four quadrants is color-coded. The goal is to have a walking tour that brings people to downtown Salisbury. This could only help increase foot traffic for the downtown businesses.

### **Mission of the History and Art Trail:**

To interpret Salisbury's history and culture through public art in the downtown area

### **Goals of the History and Art Trail:**

- Interpret our unique history and cultural diversity through a public art trail in the downtown.
- Enhance downtown Salisbury with well-designed public art.
- Encourage economic vitality through increased tourism and retail business.
- Provide educational opportunities to experience the history of Salisbury.

- Preserve and interpret the events and stories of Salisbury through a variety of artistic media and styles.
- Encourage participation by artists representing diverse racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
- Build partnerships between public, private and community groups.
- Provide opportunities to inform the community about public art.

**Administration of the program:**

- Downtown Salisbury Public Art Committee includes representatives from: Downtown Salisbury, Inc., Community Appearance Commission, City of Salisbury, Convention and Visitors Bureau, Waterworks Visual Arts Center, Rowan Museum, Rowan Public Library, Historic Salisbury Foundation, Others: school system, downtown churches, downtown business, local historians, etc.

Barbara Perry spoke to business owners in Asheville and found that they believed the art project there had a positive impact on their businesses. Asheville did learn that they needed guidelines to prevent damage to the art from utility/street maintenance and repair. The art in Asheville helped to fill vacant buildings. Tourism has grown and now Asheville is one of the top ten art destinations for public art in the country.

The presentation included examples of large art installations.

**Additional comments:**

- The school system has not responded to invitations to participate in the HAT project.
- Salisbury has been called a living laboratory because it has not destroyed its history.
- Robert Crum covered guidelines for Council.
- A model contract for artists has been created.
- An inventory of historic sites has been created.

Ray Moose created a plaster image (below) of the feather marker that could represent one of the five eras - the colonial era. Members were able to see the detail of the two feathers that are representative of the crossroads.



It was suggested that a “digital docent” or the pamphlet could explain the significance of the design of the art. It would be good to point the reader to more information if they are interested.

## Neighborhoods & Education Committee

- *Spring Spruce-Up*

A deadline of March 1 has been established to submit the insert that will go in the water bill to announce the Spring Spruce Up. Lynn Raker is exploring some options to cut the cost of producing the insert. A line will be added to the insert encouraging residents to call to adopt or report an area that needs attention. The committee wondered if residents who have their bill drafted from their bank would receive the announcement. CAC has an agreement with Public Services Department to pay for water bill inserts for one of either the spring or fall spruce up events. The dates for the 2005 event are April 25-29.

The neighborhood leaders will be included in this project. An effort is being made to contact neighborhoods and to update the CAC contact list. It would be helpful to make the event fun. (Park Avenue had a hot dog roast one year.)

The standard contacts and non-profit advertising methods were discussed: newspapers, radio, and television will be asked to help to educate the public about the Spring Spruce Up.

- *Nuisance*

Photographs of four locations near downtown demonstrated a need for “clean up.” Jeff Benfield, the nuisance officer, has been contacted about violations. (City Ordinance - Sec. 14-7. Upholstered or interior furniture and appliances. ) The zoning administrator was contacted about some pool piping left behind a building at 111 W. Bank Street. Public Services was contacted about furniture left at a dumpster behind Hometown Furniture. Hometown Furniture management said this deposit was made by others, but they will see that the furniture is removed and they intend to post a sign. (City Ordinance - Sec. 21-29. Bulky household refuse; heavy items; tree limbs, leaves, etc.) At 414 South Main Street a trailer is serving as storage. The zoning administrator will look into what can be done about the trailer.

Bruce Wilson suggested that the Community Appearance Commission take a look at storage containers that are sometimes referred to as “PODS.” These are used as temporary storage containers.

## Landscaping

- *Tree Topping & Pruning.* Johnny Safrit felt the current ordinance was good. There have been a number of complaints about Duke Power’s tree topping practices in Salisbury. Many attempts have been made to remedy the problem over a long period of time. Judy Kandl asked what Charlotte and other cities are doing to preserve trees. The Tree Board is addressing this issue.

## **Municipal Service District (MSD) and Innes Street Improvement Grants (ISG)**

- Duck Blind Gallery lost their awning in a recent storm
- Hardees replaced their sign

## **OLD BUSINESS**

*The CAC and Planning Board were asked to follow up on the Temporary Sign Ordinance 12 months after implementing it. The following are excerpts from that presentation that will go before City Council.*

Salisbury has a strong history of supporting community appearance issues. The Salisbury Vision 2020 Plan quotes a vision from the task force: “We see a community of clean, tree-lined streets, subtle commercial signage, and buildings of architectural distinction nestled amidst properly designed and well-maintained landscaping.”

The purpose of the Sign Ordinance as stated in the text is “To regulate and control signs and their placement throughout the City... to provide a pleasing overall environmental setting and good community appearance, which is deemed vital to the continued economic attractiveness of the city.”

The recent 2004 Salisbury Citizen Survey revealed that 89% of respondents had a favorable impression of the importance of Community Appearance. 53% strongly agreed and only 10 % were neutral.

The City Council is taking compelling steps to create a positive business climate in the City. The City is streamlining the development review process and revising the utility extension policy. A new Land Development Ordinance, currently under construction, should further simplify the development process. Other business-enhancing initiatives include the civic and convention center study, the Farmers’ Market and the proposed business incubator, and the Rowan Jobs Initiative.

A city that values and preserves community appearance is a more desirable business venue.

- September 17, 2002: David Harrison, owner of Harrison’s Florist, appeared before City Council to ask that he be allowed to continue to use various signs and a banner to advertise sales at his business. Several other business owners were present to support Mr. Harrison and requested that current sign regulations be revised. Council directed a joint Planning Board/ CAC committee to review sign ordinance provisions for businesses to advertise special sales events.
- December 17, 2002: The Committee presented a proposal to Council for temporary signs for special events or promotions. Council referred Special Sales Signs Committee’s recommendations to Planning Board for zoning text amendment.

- April 15, 2003: Council adopted a text amendment for temporary signs for special events or promotions.  
Prior to adoption of amendment businesses were allowed to use a banner to advertise only grand openings and going out of business sales.

See City Ordinance - Section 9.13. Temporary signs for special events or promotions.

#### **November 2003 – November 2004**

Businesses in Salisbury (total)		1,689
Permits issued for Temporary Signs		23
Businesses with repeat violations		5
Total fines levied	approximately	\$1,500
Fines collected	approximately	\$300

Enforcement (City's standard citation policy):

- 1st contact: verbal warning w/ explanation of ordinance
- 2nd contact: written civil citation
- 3rd contact: written civil citation w/ \$50 fine. No additional permits for 3 months.
- 4th contact: written civil citation w/ \$100 fine. No additional permits for 6 months.

Additional contacts:

- Letter advising business owner of \$100 fine/ day for additional violations. Violation business turned over to City Attorney.

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#### **STATE LAW:**

Except as provided in subsection (b), if any person shall violate an ordinance of a county, city, town, or metropolitan sewerage district created under Article 5 of Chapter 162A, he shall be guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor and shall be fined not more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00). No fine shall exceed fifty dollars (\$50.00) unless the ordinance expressly states that the maximum fine is greater than fifty dollars (\$50.00).

Issues for Council Consideration:

- Communication: Are we providing enough information about sales sign provisions to businesses?
- Enforcement issues: follow-through, fairness, effectiveness of current civil penalties
- Patterns of violation: process being ignored, geographic concentration
- Direction from Council

## NEW BUSINESS

- Preston Sale presented a resolution that was prepared by the Historic Salisbury Foundation. The resolution addresses the recent historic preservation issue concerning two buildings belonging to First United Methodist Church. The Historic Preservation Commission has tabled the church's request to demolish these two buildings located on West Fisher Street. Mr. Sale would like an officer of the Community Appearance Commission to sign the resolution in a show of support to save the buildings. He received support on the issue from all present. Members of the CAC will receive a copy of the resolution via e-mail. Bruce Wilson did read the resolution to the commission.
- Members were reminded about the training to be provided by City Council. The invitation included the following text:

We would appreciate your participation in two events. The first is a training program for our boards and commissions. The training will be provided by Dr. Phillip Boyle, who will lead sessions on "Public Leadership in a Democratic Society: Balancing Values and Choices." Dr. Boyle is a nationally renowned speaker and educator in the field of democratic decision-making. The training will be conducted on Thursday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Rowan County Library, 201 W Fisher Street, in the Stanback Auditorium. The schedule for the training will be **1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. and includes the Community Appearance Commission**. CAC is invited to a reception honoring the Boards and Commissions members from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the F&M Trolley Barn on Easy Street (corner of Liberty and Lee Streets) in Downtown Salisbury.

## OTHER BUSINESS

### Boards and Commissions - Expiring Terms for Community Appearance Commission

Name	Exp. Date	Eligible for Reappointment
Mr. James Donaldson	3/31/05	No
Mr. Johnny Safrit	3/31/05	Yes
Mr. Preston Sale	3/31/05	No
Mr. Bruce Wilson, Chair	3/31/05	No

Lori McMahon, Director of Waterworks, has agreed to be considered by Council to fill a vacancy on the Community Appearance Commission.

Being no further business the meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

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